

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 12564 01 OF 02 291144Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----291201Z 048717 /44

R 291135Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2245
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 12564

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-L
TAGS: PFOR, FR, UR, CC
SUBJ: FRENCH-SOVIET RELATIONS: LETTERS AND VISITORS

REF: PARIS 11666

1. WITH ONLY TWO MONTHS TO GO BEFORE LONG-DELAYED
BREZHNEV VISIT TO FRANCE, SOVIETS HAVE NOW CLEARLY
STEPPED UP PACE OF ACTIVITIES, WITH CALLS BY SOVIET
AMBASSADOR ON ELYSEE AND VISIT, APRIL 25-28, BY
SOVIET AMBASSADOR DUBININ.

2. SPEAKING ON STRICT BACKGROUND BASIS, ELYSEE
INTERNATIONAL STAFF SOURCE TELLS US THAT, CONTRARY
TO PRESS REPORTS, SEQUENCE STARTED WITH URPUBLICIZED
BREZHNEV LETTER TO GISCARD IMMEDIATELY AFTER FRENCH
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ANNOUNCEMENT OF AIR-TRANSPORT AID TO ZAIRE, ASKING
WHAT ON EARTH FRENCH WERE UP TO. GISCARD WAS ABOUT
TO SEND OFF REPLY WHEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR CHERVONENKO
CALLED AT ELYSEE APRIL 14 TO OFFER RUNDOWN ON
SECRETARY VANCE'S TRIP TO MOSCOW. AFTER LISTENING
TO ACCOUNT--WHICH WAS "ABOUT HALF OF WHAT ONE COULD
READ IN THE PAPERS," BUT WHOSE THRUST DID NOT FORE-

CLOSE PROSPECTS FOR SALT--GISCARD TOOK OPPORTUNITY
TO PROVIDE PRECIS OF HIS REPLY TO BREZHNEV ON ZAIRE.

3. GIST WAS THAT GISCARD WAS GRATIFIED BREZHNEV HAD
FELT FREE TO COME TO HIM DIRECTLY WITH HIS CONCERNS.
GISCARD WOULD REPLY IN SAME SPIRIT. MATTER WAS
SIMPLE. ZAIRE FELT IT WAS BEING ATTACKED AND HAD
ASKED FRANCE FOR ASSISTANCE. FRANCE HAD DECIDED TO
OFFER IT SOME ASSISTANCE. THAT WAS ALL. REPLY WAS
MOST CAREFULLY WORDED TO AVOID ANY INFERENCE THAT
GISCARD CONSIDERED SOVIETS OR CUBANS DIRECTLY OR
INDIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SHABA AFFAIR, OR THAT IT
COULD HAVE ANY EFFECT ON FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS.
RESULT, ELYSEE NOTED WAS DISTINCT COOLING OF SOVIET
MEDIA ATTACKS ON FRENCH ACTION, WHICH HAD INITIALLY
BEEN SHARP.

4. CHERVONENKO RETURNED TO ELYSEE FOR SECOND CALL ON
APRIL 25 AND WAS RECEIVED BY FRANCOIS-PONCET. THIS
TIME ZAIRE WAS NOT MENTIONED AND SUBJECT WAS INDEED
PREPARATIONS FOR BREZHNEV VISIT, WHICH ELYSEE NOW
CONSIDERS SET FOR LAST WEEK IN JUNE. HOWEVER, PRECISE
DATE MAY STILL NOT HAVE BEEN QUITE ESTABLISHED.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 291135Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
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USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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5. THEN, ON EVENING OF APRIL 25, SOVIET AMBASSADOR DUBININ ARRIVED FOR TWO DAYS OF TALKS WITH ANDREANI, IN WHICH CHERVONENKO PARTICIPATED BUT REPORTEDLY SAID NOTHING. ACCORDING TO ELYSEE SOURCE, DUBININ AGAIN RANG ALL THE CHANGES ON THE USSR'S TRADITIONAL DISARM-AMENT THEMES, INCLUDING EVEN NON-FIRST-USE, WITH LITTLE SUCCESS. SOURCE SAYS GISCARD IS "DETERMINED" NOT TO YIELD OR MAKE GESTURES ON THESE POINTS. ON OTHER HAND, DUBININ VISIT SUGGESTS THAT THERE MAY BE "SOMEWHAT MORE PROMISE" IN GISCARD-BREZHNEV DISCUS-SIONS IN THE NON-PROLIFERATION FIELD, AN AREA IN WHICH FRANCE, THE USSR, AND OTHERS IN THE WEST HAVE OVER-LAPPING INTERESTS. (SAME POINT WAS RECENTLY MADE TO US BY A SOVIET SOURCE.) IN ADDITION, ECONOMIC REVIEW WILL BE OF INTEREST, SINCE THIS IS "ONLY ASPECT FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS CURRENTLY GOING WELL." PROBLEM IN DRAFTING BREZHNEV-GISCARD COMMUNIQUE WILL
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BE TO "CREATE IMPRESSION" THAT POLITICAL RELATIONS ALSO MOVING FORWARD. SOURCE REITERATED, HOWEVER, THAT GISCARD WILL NOT MAKE SPECIAL EFFORT TO ACHIEVE THIS EFFECT.

6. DUBININ, OF COURSE, ALSO DISCUSSED BELGRADE CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE WITH ANDREANI (REFTEL). THIS THEME WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL. WE ALSO EXPECT TO SEE ANDREANI IN NEXT FEW DAYS FOR DIRECT IMPRESSIONS OF DUBININ VISIT.
GAMMON

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